

Serial Number: 09/607,568

Docket Number: 10004010-1

REMARKS

Upon entry of this Response, claims 1-4, 6-9, 11, 12, 14-16, 19-21, 24-28, and 29-36 remain pending in the present application. Claims 1, 6, and 11 have been amended. Claims 5, 10, and 13 have been cancelled, and claims 29-36 are added herein. Applicants request reconsideration of the pending claims in view of the following remarks.

As an initial matter, Applicants note that claims 17 and 18 (previously cancelled) had originally depended from claim 14. In the previous Response, claim 14 was amended solely to incorporate the subject matter of claims 17 and 18. Similarly, claim 19 was also amended solely to incorporate the subject matter of original claims 22 and 23, and claim 24 was amended solely to incorporate the subject matter of original claims 27 and 28. In the prior Office Action, claims 17, 22, and 27 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent 6,336,114 issued to Garrison (hereafter "Garrison"), in view of the article entitled Using Netscape 2 authored by Brown (hereafter "Brown"), in view of U.S. Patent 5,742,769 issued to Misra (hereafter "Misra"). Also, claims 18, 23, and 28 were previously rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Garrison in view of Brown, and further in view of U.S. Patent 5,742,769 issued to Lee (hereafter "Lee").

In the Final Office Action, claims 14, 19, and 24 apparently are rejected by the combination of Garrison, Brown, Lee, and slides from a presentation entitled "IMAP Has Everything POP Doesn't" (hereafter "IMAP"). In item 2, the Final Office Action states "Applicants' amendment necessitated the new grounds of rejection presented in this Office Action".

Applicants respectfully disagree. The amendments to claims 14, 19, and 24 merely incorporated the subject matter of the dependent claims that were originally filed in the patent application as described above. Accordingly, in substance, none of the amendments to claims 14, 19, and 24 necessitate new grounds of rejection as such subject matter was present before the Examiner at the time the patent application was originally filed. Thus, the inclusion of the additional IMAP reference in order to effect a rejection of claims 14, 19, and 24 was not necessitated by any amendment by Applicants. Therefore, Applicants assert that the finality of the present Office Action is improper. Accordingly, Applicants request that the finality of the Office Action be withdrawn.

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In item 1 of the Office Action, it appears that claims 1-4, 6-9, 11, 12, 14-16, 19-21, and 24-26 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Garrison in view of Brown. A prima facie case of obviousness is established only when the prior art teaches or suggests all of the elements of the claims. MPEP §2143.03, In re Rijckaert, 9 F.3d 1531, 28 U.S.P.Q2d 1955, 1956 (Fed. Cir. 1993). For the reasons that follow, Applicants request that the rejection of these claims be withdrawn in view of the various amendments presented.

To begin, claim 1 has been amended as follows:

1. A system in a digital sending device for authenticating a user, comprising:
 - a processor coupled to a local interface;
 - a memory coupled to the local interface; and
 - send logic stored on the memory and executable by the processor, the send logic comprising:
 - logic to input a password associated with the user;
 - logic to authenticate the password and to obtain a FROM field identifier associated with the user, wherein the FROM field identifier is obtained from a directory server through authentication logic executed on a server on a network, the digital sending device being coupled to the network; and
 - logic to lock the FROM field identifier into a FROM field associated with a data transmission, wherein the user is prevented from entering or altering the FROM field identifier at the digital sending device.

Applicants note that claim 1 has been amended herein to indicated that the FROM field identifier is obtained from a directory server through authentication logic executed on a server on a network. Also, claim 1 has been amended to indicate that the user is prevented from entering or altering the FROM field identifier at the digital sending device. Applicants assert that at least these elements are not shown or suggested by the cited combination of Garrison and Brown.

Specifically, Brown discusses the use of an email system on a client device. In this respect, the email system of Brown generates emails in which the FROM field is not displayed in a user interface in which the user composes the email. However, Applicants assert that the email system described allows a user to configure the FROM address at the device in which the email is composed. Specifically, such an email system includes a field in which a user may enter the FROM address for purposes of transmitting emails to other users. A user may enter or alter the FROM

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address typically through an "options" menu as is shown with reference to FIG. 13.13 on page 342 of Brown.

In this respect, as described in Brown, the FROM field identifier is stored within the client itself upon which the email system operates. Also, a user can access the FROM field identifier within the email system to enter or alter the FROM field identifier through an options menu or other menu. To the extent that Brown discusses an email system in which the FROM field identifier is configurable, Brown teaches away from the invention as set forth in claim 1 as amended.

In addition, since the FROM field identifier is included in the email system of Brown, it is not obtained from a directory server as claimed in claim 1 as amended. In addition, Garrison fails to show or suggest the elements of claim 1 as described above with regard to Brown.

Accordingly, Applicants assert that claim 1 as amended above incorporates elements not shown or suggested by the cited combination of Garrison and Brown. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claim 1 be withdrawn. In addition, Applicants note that claims 6 and 11 have been amended herein to incorporate elements similar in scope with those of claim 1. Accordingly, Applicants request that the rejection of claims 6 and 11 be withdrawn. In addition, Applicants request that the rejection of claims 2-4, 7-9, and 12 be withdrawn as depending from claims 1, 6, and 11, respectively.

In addition, claims 14, 19, and 24 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over the combination of Garrison, Brown, Lee and IMAP as described above. Claim 14 as previously amended, recites as follows:

14. A system for authenticating a user, comprising:
 - a processor coupled to a local interface;
 - a memory coupled to the local interface; and
 - authentication logic stored on the memory and executable by the processor, the authentication logic comprising:
 - logic to verify a password associated with a user comprising logic to communicate with a domain controller to verify the password and to obtain a secure identification tag associated with the user from the domain controller; and
 - logic to obtain a FROM field identifier associated with the user comprising logic to request the FROM field identifier from an electronic mail server based upon the secure identification tag, the FROM field identifier being associated with the secure identification tag.

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Applicants note that claims 19 and 24 include subject matter similar in scope with that of claim 14. With respect to claims 14, 19, and 24, the Office Action states:

"As per claims 14, 19, and 24, the Applicant argues that Lee fails to show that a form field identifier is obtained from an electronic mail server based upon a secure identification tag. The Examiner points to Garrison for the authentication of a user as a secure identification tag. Garrison discloses a client with a processor (DSP) and memory (disc) coupled to a local network (network interface), (Col. 3, lines 53-65). Garrison discloses logic to input a password associated with a user, (col. 4, lines 28-29, col. 5, lines 4-8). Garrison discloses logic to authenticate the password, (col. 6, lines 3-18). Garrison does not disclose a FROM field. The Examiner points to Brown to show a locked FROM field based upon a secure identification. Brown discloses authenticating a user with a password, (page 226, paragraph 1). Brown discloses obtaining a FROM field identifier, and locking the FROM field identifier into a FROM field associated with data transmission, (Ray Gronberg gornberg@nando.net) associated with the user (page 342, figure 13.13).

The Examiner points to Lee as further evidence of logging in for authentication (col. 7, lines 19-30), wherein the system will automatically request the FROM field based upon set authentication (col. 7, lines 35-50).

The Examiner points to the well-known IMAP protocol in DECUS slides 69, 70, and 72. The well-known IMAP email protocol provides for recovering said FROM field. The IMAP protocol provides online email accounts wherein a user must log in to an email server (slide 69, authentication). Once client is authenticated to access their email account, the user has a security tag, and multiple privileges, (slide 70, 72, unique identifier, read write). Once a user is authenticated, upon creating a message, the FROM field will automatically be added to said message, and sent upon the user's approval. It would be obvious to one skilled in the art to combine Garrison, Brown, Lee and IMAP email, because a remote server allows email access from anywhere" (Office Action, pages 3-4).

Applicants respectfully disagree. Specifically, the Examiner incorrectly assumes that Lee shows a system that "automatically requests the FROM field based upon an authentication". Specifically, as stated previously, at column 7, lines 35-50, Lee states:

"The processing system thus copies the recipient's email address (which was stored but not provided to the requesting user) into a "to" field; copies the sender's email address into a "from" field and a "reply-to" field; and puts into the "subject" field a phrase indicating that the source of the message is via this feature (step 178). In addition to this header, the processing system attaches an explanatory note for the recipient. Processing system 32 then causes the message to be routed to the recipient via a conventional email server 34 (step 180). The explanatory message to the

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recipient indicates that the sender is trying to communicate with the recipient; that the recipient should reply to the message only if the recipient wants to communicate with the sender; and that if the recipient replies, the recipient's actual email address is sent to the sender."

In neither the above excerpt nor anywhere else in Lee is it discussed that a FROM field is obtained from an electronic mail server based upon a secure identification tag as claimed with respect to claim 14. Lee discusses the concept of sending email to a recipient whose address is restricted and must be obtained through specific steps disclosed therein. Rather, the discussion of Lee merely describes the sending of an email message by insert various information in the email for transmission on a network such as a sender's email address or recipient's email address and other information based upon that which is entered by a user. Also, it is pointed out that as an email system, Lee describes the concept of generating emails in which the user has carte blanche to change the FROM address.

In addition, with regard to the IMAP protocol, the "unique identifier" is a session identifier associated with the network session, not a security tag. Also, the From field identifier is provided by the client device and is not obtained from an electronic mail server as claimed. The "READ-WRITE" privileges say nothing about where the FROM field identifier is obtained. Therefore, Applicant asserts that the reference to the IMAP standard via the slides 69, 70, and 72 is erroneous.

Therefore, Applicants request that the rejection of claims 14, 19, and 24 be withdrawn. In addition, Applicants request that the rejection of claims 15-16, 20-21, and 25-26 be withdrawn as depending from claims 14, 19, and 24, respectively.

In addition, claims 29-36 are added herein to claim additional embodiments of the present invention. Favorable action with respect to claims 29-36 is respectfully requested.

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Applicant respectfully requests that all outstanding objections and rejections be withdrawn and that this application and all presently pending claims be allowed to issue. If the Examiner has any questions or comments regarding Applicant's response, the Examiner is encouraged to telephone Applicant's undersigned counsel.

Respectfully submitted,



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